

Appl. No. : 10/797,211
Filed : March 10, 2004

REMARKS

Applicant again thanks Examiner Guidotti for examining the application and for her time during the interview on July 17th. Claims 21 and 23 are amended as set forth above. New Claims 37-47 are added. As discussed during the interview, the amended and new claims are supported by the application and drawings as filed such that no new matter has been added.

Upon entry of the amended claims, Claims 21-35 and 37-47 are pending with Claim 36 withdrawn, but potentially subject to rejoinder. The specific rejections are discussed in more detail below.

Discussion of Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd Paragraph - Indefiniteness

The Examiner rejected Claims 21-35 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner questions whether in Claim 21, line 6 whether the word "first" is meant to be "second?"

As discussed during the interview and as set forth above, Claim 21 has been amended in relevant part at line 6 to recite "second" rather than "first." In view of the amendment, Applicant request reconsideration and withdrawal of the indefiniteness rejection.

Discussion of Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 - Obviousness

The Examiner rejected Claims 21-35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,836,034 ("Galvan Garza") in view U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0029967 ("McDonough"). Also, the Examiner rejected Claim 22 as being unpatentable over Galvan Garza and McDonough in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,690,125 ("Beller"). Furthermore, the Examiner rejected Claim 23 as being unpatentable over Galvan Garza and McDonough in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,146,479 ("Stoker"). Finally, the Examiner rejected Claims 25 and 30 as being unpatentable over Galvan Garza and McDonough in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,916,382 ("Aldredge").

Applicant respectfully submits that the claimed devices are not obvious in view of the cited art. As discussed during the July 17th interview, the references alone, or even if combined, fail to disclose or teach every feature of the claimed device. Therefore, there is no *prima facie* obviousness.

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For example, Galvan Garza fails to teach or suggest a device where "the first, second, third and fourth pluralities of parallel ridges form a plurality of continuous ridges, wherein each ridge continuously circumscribes each of said four faces.

Galvan Garza discloses devices with a plurality of discontinuous "side-by-side salients extending about peripheral edges" of the device. See Galvan Garza at column 2, lines 36-38 and the Abstract. The devices lack the ridges or grooves as set forth in the pending claims. Furthermore, the secondary references, McDonough, Beller, Stoker and Aldredge fail to disclose the claimed subject matter, including the plurality of ridges or grooves according to the claims.

Thus, the references alone or combined fail to teach or suggest each and every limitation of the claims. Further, as illustrated and discussed during the interview held on July 17, 2007, the claimed device provides many surprising advantages, none of which are present in the cited references alone or when combined.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are not obvious over the claimed references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under § 103 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to the Restriction Requirement. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if any issues require clarification, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney to resolve such issues promptly.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,
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